

**Minutes
Clean Energy Development Board
Quarterly Meeting December 16, 2020**

In Attendance (*Meeting held at electronically via remote video and phone*)

Board Members:	Attending	Absent
Kate Desrochers (KD)	X	
Jared Duval (JD) <i>Co-Chair</i>	X	
David Farnsworth (DF)	X	
Ken Jones (KJ)	X	
Sam Swanson (SS) <i>Co-Chair</i>	X	
Johanna Miller (JM)	X	
Paul Zabriskie (PZ)	X	

State Employees:

Andrew Perchlik (**AP**), Fund Manager, Clean Energy Development Fund, Public Service Department (PSD)

Ed McNamara, Director of Planning at the PSD.

Members of the Public: Jeff Forward, Renewable Energy Vermont (REV); Oliva Campbell Anderson, REV; Peter Samson, VT Economic Development Authority; Dave Frank, SunWood Biomass

The meeting started at 1:04 with **JD** presiding.

I. Agenda

The draft agenda was reviewed, discussed briefly, and agreed upon.

II. Introductions:

Members of the Public and board members introduced themselves.

II. Minutes

SS moved the draft minutes of the Board's 10/23/20 quarterly meeting be accept as presented.

The motion was seconded by **KD** and the motion passed unanimously with **KJ** abstaining.

III. Fund Manager's Report

AP gave a brief overview of the existing grants and programs and made a request of the Board to approve a change to the coal change-out incentive to allow for a highly efficient cord-wood boiler to be installed for farm and commercial entities that take out a coal system. The current program only allows pellet boilers to be installed. The Board had questions about the proposal and wanted it confirmed that the particulate and efficiency standards of the program would apply to any cord-wood boiler installed as part of the incentive. **AP** confirmed that all other requirements would remain for any cord-wood boiler. The Board approved the requested change.

IV. Public Comment - Future of the CEDF

Members of the public present were invited to speak to the Board regarding the future of the CEDF, based on a memo and request for comment submitted by the CEDF. Here is a list of those that provided comments and an outline of their comments:

Jeff Forward:

- Thanked the Board and CEDF for its work over the years.
- Agreed with the memo that things have changed since CEDF was founded and re-vitalization of the Fund was needed.
- Highlighted CEDF's positive impact on VT's solar sector (and invited CEDF to look at solar market again) and recently the wood heating sector.
- Did not want the CEDF to be disbanded as was suggested as one option in the memo.
- Said CEDF has been very effecting and should continue.
- Said the best path forward was a wait-and-see approach as there may be federal funding available to the CEDF and Vermont's Climate Plan and CEP to be issued later in 2021 may impact the CEDF's future.

Dave Frank:

- Said he wants CEDF to continue and that the CEDF has been instrumental in the economic growth of the wood heating sector in Vermont.

Oliva Campbell-Anderson (Renewable Energy Vermont):

- Said CEDF is the best tool for promotion of State's clean energy goals.
- Pointed out the Fund's efficiency and low administration costs.
- Emphasized that the CEDF staff and CED Board had expertise that shouldn't go to waste.
- Recommends continuing the CEDF for at least another year, as federal funds might come in the next year and the CEDF would be a great vehicle for those funds.

Peter Samson (Vermont Economic Development Authority):

- Said he was there mainly to listen but shared his optimism for future and thus supported a wait and see approach as a prudent one as there might be funding available for the type of clean energy work of the CEDF.

Ed McNamara from the PSD joined in the meeting and discussion at 1:45

AP explained the public Comments received in writing from three of the Regional Planning Commissions (RPC) and Brock Gibian of Ecogy Energy. The RPCs expressed support for the CEDF's mission and past work and that they hoped it would continue. Mr. Gibian supported the option #2 of the memo which calls for a legislative study of the future of the CEDF.

V. Board Discussion

KJ suggested that other government agencies might have federal funds in the upcoming year to use for clean energy and that the CEDF could be a development entity to coordinate amongst all parts of Government as well as to seek out additional funds. **KJ** said the CEDF should look to development of other funds to pursue clean energy.

JM: Thanked the public that made and sent in comments about the CEDF. She said the landscape is changing at the federal and state level and thus the future role of the CEDF is yet to be determined. She thought the CEDF has played an important role and has built relationships and expertise and thus now was not the time to disband the Fund. She also thought a study by the legislature of the CEDF might be a good idea.

DF: Said the CEDF is an organization of an ideal size and scale that fills the right niche in Vermont and should continue.

Ed McNamara commented that there while the CEDF continues as is with its remaining funds the newly formed Climate Council could investigate the future of the CEDF together with all the other groups and programs promoting clean energy in Vermont. He also suggested that dissolving CEDF – or folding it into other State programs – should not be off the table. He recommended that the CED Board develop its own proposal for the CEDF as the Climate Council may not be able to come up with a solution for the CEDF.

DF: Responded that the Climate Council considering the CEDF as part of its climate plan was a good idea. He said that having Andrew Perchlik as the director is a great asset of the Fund. He said that the CEDF is ready to go and could help the Climate Council if it is looking for parts of the state government to meet the challenges they have and enact the programs they develop.

JM mentioned that Ed McNamara was on the Climate Council's agenda to talk about the inventory of climate mitigation strategies happening in the state government. **JD** said the State/Climate Council needed to do an inventory of all the climate programs and an assessment of those programs and design an effort to coordinate them. He said the CEDF has done well in building and developing local markets in clean energy. He said this was a space where other clean energy programs were not working. **JD** said the CEDF successfully built programs and then backed out when others started supporting the market or when the market matured.

SS said the CEDF has been very nimble and has shown ability to change programs to changing conditions/funding/market conditions, and with low overhead. He sees the Climate Council as key to directing what the CEDF should be. He said that maybe the Board be changed into a different structure with a different purpose than it has now. He suggested looking to position the Fund and the CED Board to figure out how a small Fund and oversight Board could be best used to meet the goals of the Climate Council.

There was a general discussion of the timing of potential clean energy funds from federal Government.

DF said that the CEDF being housed in the PSD, together with the State Energy Office and Public Advocate was valuable and thought equity could be something the CEDF works on within the PSD.

SS suggested the CEDF write a short memo regarding conclusions of the Board's discussion on the future of the CEDF. He said the ideas discussed, like the possible connection with Climate Council should be included. He wanted to memorialize the comments and the response to the

CEDF Future memo, which he characterized as being mainly taking a wait and see approach but also being actively engaged in the State's clean energy discussions.

JD and others agreed a memo would be helpful for internal clarity. **AP** said he would draft a memo for the Board.

V. Next Meetings

The Board members discussed when they should meet in 2021. They agreed the next meeting be set for Wednesday, March 3, 2021 from 1:00 to 3:00 PM.

--Without objection **JD** adjourned the meeting at 2:46